

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 DHA-02 L-03 CIAE-00 COME-00

EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 AID-05 TRSE-00

IO-13 PC-01 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /091 W

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FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6348

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE JOHANNESBURG 1746

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SF

SUBJECT: SSRC VS. SCHOOL BOARDS

REF: A) USINFO 1677

B) PRETORIA 3220

1. FOLLOWING DETENTION OF SSRC LEADER SECHABA (DANIEL) MONTSITSI JUNE 10, NEW STUDENT LEADER ELECTED WAS TROMFOMO (GORDON) SONO, STUDENT FROM ORLANDO HIGH SCHOOL. SONO'S NAME APPEARED IN NEWS-PAPERS JUNE 28 BECAUSE OF REPORTED REMARKS CONCERNING HOW BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS CAME TO RSA (REFTEL A). SONO ATTENDED MEETING AT OFFICES OF "THE WORLD" JUN 27 AND THREW WEIGHT OF STUDENT LEADERSHIP BEHIND EFFORTS TO ELECT INTERIM COMMITTEE TO COME UP WITH BLUE-PRINT FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SOWETO (SEE REFTEL B).

2. NEWS REPORTS JULY 5 INDICATE SSRC BEHIND SONO HAS DEMANDED THAT SCHOOL BOARDS DISBAND. THERE ARE 26 SCHOOL BOARDS IN SOWETO, MOST OF THEM ORGANIZED ALONG ETHNIC LINES. ASKING MEMBERS TO RESIGN IS NOTHING NEW; IN 1976 BEFORE THE SOWETO RIOTS THE SOWETO TEACHERS ASS'N CALLED SCHOOL BOARDS " PART OF THE PROBLEM" AND SAID THEY SHOULD BE ABOLISHED IN THEIR PRESENT FORM. TRADI-

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TIONALLY, 25PCT OF BOARD MEMBERS WERE APPOINTED BY BANTU EDUCATION DEPT (BED) WITH 75PCT ELECTED BY PARENTS. BED, HOWEVER, HAS VETO POWER OVER THOSE INDIVIDUALS CHOSEN BY PARENTS. RESULT WAS THAT "CONTROVERSIAL" PEOPLE (EXAMPLES: PERCY QOBOZA, SALLY MOTLANA) THOUGH ELECTED WERE TURNED DOWN AND THEREFORE UNABLE TO TAKE UP POSITIONS ON BOARD. BED ALSO APPOINTED CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN OF BOARDS.

3. NEW REGULATIONS ENACTED IN POST SOWETO-76 SITUATION ALLOW FOR ALL SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS BUT ONE TO BE ELECTED BY SCHOOL COMMITTEES, WHICH IN TURN ARE ELECTED BY PARENTS. NOMINATED MEMBERS IS APPOINTED BY BED. CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN ARE ELECTED BY MEMBERS INSTEAD OF BEING APPOINTED BY BED.

4. COMMENT: SSRC LIKELY USE SAME TACTICS AS IT USED AGAINST UBC -- MAKING DEMANDS, ENGAGING IN DISCUSSION WITH INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS AND THEN BEGINNING TO LEAN ON THEM IF THEY DO NOT RESIGN. SSRC IS INTENT ON "DESTROYING" BANTU EDUCATION SYSTEM. BOARDS ARE VIEWED AS MANIFESTATION OF "TRIBALISM," EXACERBATION OF WHICH STUDENTS PERCEIVE TO BE SAG TACTIC. JOHANNESBURG OFFICE OF BED HAS DECLINED TO COMMENT ON SSRC ULTIMATUMS GIVEN TO BOARDS. REACTION OF INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS HAS NOT YET SOLIDIFIED. MOST BLACK OBSERVERS BELIEVE SSRC WILL ULTIMATELY PREVAIL AND BOARDS WILL DISSOLVE, THOUGH FULL PRESSURE BY STUDENTS MAY NOT BE BROUGHT TO BEAR UNTIL JULY 19 WHEN SCHOOLS REOPEN.
KIRBY

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